

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. II.

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No. 7

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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CHRISTMAS CAROL.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King,"—
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel-sounds
The blessed angels sing.

But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring.
Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,

Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing.
Oh, rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!

For, lo! the days are hastening on
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When Peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.
—*E. H. Sears.*

JESUS CHRIST THE BROTHER, FRIEND, AND SAVIOUR.

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you. Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."—*LUKE ii. 10, 11, 12.*

Christmas has come once more,—the day devoted by the large majority of Christians to the commemoration of the Nativity of the Saviour. In both hemispheres of our globe, and almost from pole to pole, the voice of thanksgiving to-day is lifted up for the coming of Christ into the world.

It is a ground of great joy, I think, that we have a Saviour who was *born* to us; that is, a Saviour who appeared in *our own nature*.

Jesus, by his birth, was truly a *human being*; and in this we should rejoice. He was flesh of our flesh. He had our wants and desires, our hunger and thirst, our sensations of pleasure and pain, our natural passions. He was born of woman, was folded in a mother's arms, was nourished from a mother's breast; and he felt the gratitude, the tenderness, of a son. He bore the relations of human life towards kindred, neighbors, and friends. He grew up amidst the labors of mortal men, ate the

bread of his own earnings, and was acquainted by experience with the hardships to which the multitude of mankind are exposed. He was thus actually one of our race, a brother of the great human family. . . .

In the next place, let us rejoice that the birth of Jesus was so *humble*. . . .

I rejoice in the clouds which gathered early and continually thickened around the outward lot of Jesus, because the light within him broke through and changed them into resplendent glory. Our great privilege as Christians is that we know the mind and the character of Jesus, and these were brought out by the condition in which he was placed. How often great virtue is hidden, how often great power slumbers, for want of an appropriate sphere, for want of the trials by which alone true greatness can be revealed! . . .

I rejoice in his birth chiefly because he came to reveal by his suffering his celestial love,—to lay open to us his soul, and thus to regenerate the human soul. To regenerate and exalt human souls was Christ's ultimate end. This seems to me more and more to be the great good which we derive from the birth of Jesus. His inmost spirit was thus laid open to us. Nothing has wrought so powerfully on the human soul as the mind and character of Jesus Christ. Among all means of civilization and improvement, I can find nothing to be compared in energy with this. The great impulse which is to carry forward the human race is the character of Jesus understood ever more clearly and ever more deeply felt. . . .

Thus was he revealed as the express image of divine perfection.

Jesus came, not only to liberate the intellect, the conscience, and the energy of love: he came to bring a yet nobler salvation, by delivering the soul from the enthralling sway of creation, and lifting it into communion with the Creator. No man knows human nature till he discerns in it that central principle which might well be called the love of the Infinite. The profoundest, sublimest, grandest emotion in man is the longing for an unbounded good, the aspiration to be one with the All-Good. We grow weary of whatever is limited. Forever and everywhere we overpass all bounds.

The Infinite Creator quickens in the inmost essence of the soul this insatiable desire for which he only is the sufficing object, which he alone by his own overflowing fulness can gratify. The diverse and multiplied forms of good in creation may for a time bewilder, oppress, and imprison this divine principle; but they cannot destroy it. Forever it awaits the deliverer. Now Jesus came to set this love of the perfect free. The true redemption opens when the soul, long captive to the visible, the tangible, the material, resumes its sovereignty, and begins to ascend to its Heavenly Parent, by using the very creatures which had enthralled it as the ministers of its return to God. What liberty does that spirit gain, which, breaking away from all illusions of inferior good, gives itself freely up in veneration, confidence, and grateful joy to the Infinite Father, in whose perfect character, purposes, and works it finds an everlasting range for its noblest faculties, an ever-unfolding object of its loftiest love.

Jesus came to set free the indomitable principle of hope, which soars forever forward, on unresting pinions, out of each human heart. To all the unexplored future open vistas, where fairest prospects bloom and unfading joys bid welcome. But hope, if confined to this world, feels itself a prisoner. Its flights stop suddenly at the grave. And the impenetrable background that arrests it is an awful gloom. Now, Jesus came to dispel that darkness, and to unveil before hope interminable regions of ever-brightening splendor. What a salvation, priceless beyond conception, is it to be delivered from all fear of death; to be at liberty, to expatiate through endless ages in expectant hope; to be assured that our highest attainments here are but the beginning of our everlasting progress, and that there is no height of intelligence, power, beneficence, and bliss to which we are not destined to ascend! Jesus came, he lived, he died, to give to us the universe, and the God of the universe, by bringing our spirits into harmony with both,—by breathing into us, so far as we are receptive, the spirit, wisdom, love, and holiness, the perfect joy and peace of our heavenly Father. Receive, honor, follow, love, this blessed Saviour! Carry into life his principles. Confide in his promises, till they transform you

into the Divine Image, and give you in this world the pledge and foretaste of the world to come.

Compassionate Saviour! We welcome thee to our world. We welcome thee to our hearts. We bless thee for the divine goodness thou hast brought from heaven; for the souls thou hast warmed with love to man, and lifted up in love to God; for the efforts of divine philanthropy which thou hast inspired; and for that hope of a pure, celestial life, through which thy disciples triumph over death. Benevolent Saviour! Inspirer of goodness! We offer thee this tribute of affectionate and reverential gratitude on earth; and we hope to know, to love, to resemble, and to approach thee, more nearly and more worthily, in heaven.
W. E. Channing.

THE STILL HOUR.

OH, LOVELY VOICES OF THE SKY!

O lovely voices of the sky,
Which hymned the Saviour's birth,
Are ye not singing still on high,
Ye that sang "peace on earth"?
To us yet speak the strains
Wherewith, in time gone by,
Ye blessed the Syrian swains,
O voices of the sky!

O clear and shining light, whose beams
That hour heaven's glory shed
Around the palms and o'er the streams
And on the shepherd's head!
Be near through life and death,
As in that holiest night
Of hope and joy and faith,
O clear and shining light!

O star which led to him whose love
Brought down man's ransom free!
Where art thou? 'mid the host above
May we still gaze on thee?
In heaven thou art not set,
Thy rays earth may not dim:
Send them to guide us yet,
O star which led to him!

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

The peculiarity of Christmas joy is that it belongs to the present life, to the present hour, to earth, homes, human love, and is therefore universal. Christmas stands for

the blessings which all men inherit by being born under the influences of Christianity,—the birthright blessings of all of us. It is the festival of childhood,—of children who have no religious opinions of any kind. It is a feast of joy even in the homes of those whose faith has died out of their hearts. As the sun shines on the evil and the good, on the just and the unjust, so Christmas pours its liberal light into every home. All are in fellowship with each other around the Christmas tree. All are Christ's little ones together. This is the blessed feeling which Christmas brings every year,—a communion of joy in the coming of a little child. For one week we have a truly catholic and universal Church, in which are no divisions, no sects, nor parties, no saints nor sinners. Around the cradle of this infant all are one.

Christmas is the apotheosis of infancy. It hallows all infants. It makes all childhood sacred. It is no longer as necessary to say, "Take heed how you despise these little ones," as it was when Jesus said it. Christmas makes an aureole of heavenly light around all the infants in Christian lands.

But Christmas is more than this. While Easter gives hope of an immortal life, Christmas brings to us the hope of a better life in this world. There descends on humanity, every Christmas day, an implicit hope that the world is to be redeemed from its wrongs and sins. It is not explicit. It is not often expressed to ourselves. It is a feeling hidden in the heart, not any distinct thought.

Evil is overcome for a while by good. Whatever be the cause of this glad, hopeful feeling which pervades all Christian lands at this time, the fact is evident.

There is a beautiful legend that on Christmas all evil spirits are deprived of their power to harm, and that even the devils and the accursed in hell enjoy a brief rest from sin and misery.

However that may be, it is certainly true that many evil spirits are held in check by the coming of Christmas. This is a presage of the time when all wars shall cease; when the whole church shall be one; when the Christ of love and truth shall be everywhere accepted, obeyed, and loved, and the knowledge of God shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

The story as it stands in the first three Gospels is evidently a real and very important experience, and regarded as such by all three writers, since each has taken pains to record it. We are not told where or when the evangelists received this account from Jesus. May it possibly have been on the Sabbath that John and Andrew spent with him on the banks of the Jordan, as narrated in John's Gospel (see last lesson), that Jesus told of this experience? The Synoptics may in that case have heard of it from John and Andrew, or Jesus may have told it to them afterward. The stories vary very slightly. There are some difficulties in the narrative, which only make it more interesting; for the examination of difficulties often leads us to truths which otherwise we should not have noticed.

The account is as follows:—

1. Jesus, after his baptism, was led (or, as Mark says, driven) by the Spirit into the wilderness.

2. There he remained, fasting, forty days. (Mark merely adds he was tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered unto him.)

3. Matthew and Luke describe the first temptation in the same way and almost the same words, making the tempter say, "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." The answer of Jesus is the same in both accounts,—the quotation from Deut. viii. 3: "Man shall not live by bread alone."

4. In Matthew the second temptation is the one on the pinnacle of the temple; in Luke it is the third, but the story is the same (Schleiermacher thinks that the order in Matthew is the true one).

5. The third temptation in Matthew and the second in Luke is the temptation on the mountain. The words of the tempter are slightly varied in the two accounts. In Luke the tempter says, "For it hath been delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it." The answer is substantially the same: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

6. Matthew says, "Angels came and ministered unto him"; and Luke, "The devil departed for a season."

We cannot accept this story literally for the following reason. It is impossible to entertain for a moment the idea that a real devil appeared to Jesus, for in that case there could have been no temptation. Few people would be tempted by the suggestions of a fiend in *propria persona*, and Jesus not at all. The three temptations, nevertheless, mean *something*. They were real temptations, involving deep spiritual experience, real conflict, and final victory. What, then, does this story signify? Let us consider it, and try to find out.

(To be continued.)

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all matter for this department to Mrs. J. B. Millet, 150 Charles Street, Boston, Mass.]

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR GIVERS AND RECEIVERS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.—Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated*, all books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Millet, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Millet, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

(The editor calls attention to the valuable books offered in this number. Martineau's "Types of Ethical Theory" would be perhaps appreciated only by a student. The books by Channing, W. G. Eliot, Stopford Brooke, Robertson, Peabody, Hedge, Clarke, Beecher, Phillips Brooks, and Martineau's Sermons would be especially useful in a minister's library.)

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Mrs. Charles P. Curtis, 20 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Mass., offers to give the following books: book on Samoa; "Camp and Battle," Owen; "Bullet and Shell," Williams; "Brave Black Regiment"; nine numbers of *Forum* for 1893; Mrs. Deland's stories; "Danesbury House"; "My Lady Nicotine"; "Tillyloss Scandal"; "Robert Elsmere"; "War and Peace," Tolstoi; "Visit to Abyssinia," 2 volumes; "Twixt Greek and Greek," Chiol; Herschel's Outlines of Astronomy; Gray's Botany; Tyndall on Sound; "Cottage Building"; Sermons by Stopford Brooke, Richard Metcalf, Ephraim Peabody; "Hours of Thought," J. Martineau; three of Drummond's tracts; "Thomas Didymus," J. F. Clarke; Robertson's Life and Letters; "Put yourself in his Place"; "Strange Adventures of a Phaëton"; "Tennessee Mountains," Craddock; "Romola," George Eliot; "A Year in Eden," Miss Preston; "Hazard of New Fortunes," W. D. Howells.

Mrs. F. V. Draper, 304 Marlborough Street, Boston, Mass., offers to give the following books: the *Youth's Companion* for 1892 and a few novels in paper covers:

"The Scottish Chiefs"; "In the Golden Days"; "The Canon's Ward"; "Robert Elsmere"; "Only the Governess"; "In the Heart of the Storm"; "True as Steel"; "A Life Interest"; "Mona's Choice."

Miss E. M. Ward, Hotel Brunswick, Boston, Mass., offers "Pictures of the German Fatherland," by pen and pencil, Rev. Samuel G. Green; "Our Eyes, and How to preserve them," John Browning; "Poetical Works of Tennyson," 1 volume; "The Great Epics of Mediaeval Germany," G. T. Dippold; "New Fragments," Tyndall; "Christ's Folk in the Apennine," Francesca Alexander.

Miss Jessie Muse, 92 S. Pryor Street, Atlanta, Georgia, offers "Frankenstein," Mary Shelley; Mrs. Browning's "Poems"; "Hard Times," Charles Dickens; "Dream Life," Donald G. Mitchell.

The following list of books is offered by Miss Susie Andrews, 62 Tilden Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio: 6 numbers of *Harper's Monthly*; 9 numbers of *Current Literature*; 8 numbers of *Food*; 2 numbers of the *Arena*; *Little Men and Women* for 1892; *Youth's Companion* for 1892; *Forum*, from June to November, 1892; also, "Black Beauty"; "Lake Breezes," Oliver Optic; "The Great Taboo," "What's bred in the Bone," Grant Allen; "Baby Mine Picture Book"; "Pluck," John Strange Winter; "Mystery of Blencarrow," Mrs. Oliphant.

Miss M. E. French, Kenosha, Wisconsin, offers "Ware on Christian Character"; "Atmosphere and Atmospheric Phenomena," Thomas Dick; "Dress and Health, or How to be a Strong Woman"; "Appledore Farm," Katharine Macquoid; "Microscope Teachings," Ward; "Practical Floriculture," Henderson; "The World on Wheels," Taylor; "The English Woman in Egypt," Mrs. Poole; "The Swiss Family Robinson"; "The Barton Experiment," Habberton; Wood's "Illustrated Natural History"; "A Child's History of England"; "Shakespeare," of the Literature Primers.

"A Tale of Two Cities," Dickens; "The Childhood of the World"; "First Lessons in Natural History," Mrs. Agassiz; and "Our Farm of Four Acres, and the Money we made by it," Peter Mead. Offered by Miss Katharina Cortazzo, Meadville, Pennsylvania.

I shall be glad to send the following literature to any who live in isolated places where they have little opportunity to procure books to read: *Youth's Companion* for 1889 (two numbers missing); "Liber Amoris," H. Bernard Carpenter; "A Summary of English History," Amelia B. Edwards; Book of Common Prayer of Church of England; "Letter and Spirit," lectures by Richard Metcalf (published by Unitarian Society); Sermons by Robert Collyer; "Clara Vaughan," a novel, Blackmore; "Mary Barton," Mrs. Gaskell; "An Old Man's Love," Anthony Trollope. Address Miss F. M. Birtwell, 24 Clinton Street, Cambridgeport, Mass.

The following list is offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address requests to Mrs. Wm. Cook, 71 Appleton Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Educational Books.

Physics, Physiology, Hygiene, etc.—"Primer of Physiology and Hygiene," Smith; "Child's Health Primer"; "Hygienic Physiology"; "Elements of Physics," Gage, 2 copies (1884 and 1888); "Principles of Hygiene," E. M. Hunt; "Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene," Tracy; "The Human Body," Martin; "Elements of Natural Philosophy," Avery; "Natural Philosophy," Quackenbos; "Elements of Astronomy," Young; "The Human Body and its Health," Smith; "A Healthy Body," Stickney; "Six Lectures on School Hygiene"; "Introduction to Physical Science," Gage; "Elementary Lessons in Electricity and Magnetism," Thompson; "Introduction to Chemical Science," Williams; Tenney's "Geology," 250 engravings.

Botany.—Wood's "Class Book of Botany"; "How Plants Grow," Gray; Gray's "School and Field Book of Botany," revised.

Readers.—"Picturesque Geographic Reader"; "Nature Reader,—Seaside and Wayside"; Monroe's "Third and Fourth Readers"; Davis's "Fourth Reader"; Hillard's "Fifth Reader"; Longman's "Third and Fourth Readers"; Interstate "First Reader and Primer," Ellen M. Cyr; "New Method of Teaching Reading and Spelling," Campbell; "First and Second Music Reader," Mason (2 copies of First); "New Second Music Reader"; "First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Music Readers for Public Schools"; "Primary

Music Reader," Mason; "Beginners' Reading Book," Davis.

Geography.—"Geography of Oceans," Williams; "Methods of Teaching Geography," Crocker; "The Surface Zones of the Earth," K. Johnson; "Our World," No. 1, Mary L. Hall.

Arithmetic.—"Lessons in Numbers"; Franklin's "Primary Arithmetic"; "Key to Franklin's Written Arithmetic"; Walton's "Written Arithmetic."

Primers.—"Gallery Lessons," lessons for infant schools; "Easy Steps for Little Feet," Swinton; "A Primer," Stickney.

English.—"First Lessons in Language," Southworth and Goddard; "Spelling and Language Book," Metcalf; "Language Exercises"; Tweed's "Grammars for Common Schools"; "Lessons in English," Lockwood; "English Grammar," Swett (1843); "Rules and Cautions in English Grammar," Rush-ton; "Practical Lessons in the Use of English," Mary Hyde; "Our English," Prof. A. S. Hill; Strang's "Exercises in English"; Murray's "Practical English Composition"; Graham's "English Synonyms"; Quackenbos's "Composition and Rhetoric"; Parker's "Progressive Exercises in English Composition."

Miscellaneous.—"Synopsis of First Three Books of Mill's Political Economy"; Whately's "Elements of Logic"; Ackerman's "Natural History"; "Use of Models for Form, Study, and Drawing" (2 copies); "Teacher's Manual of Form, Study, and Drawing" (2 copies).

Religious Books.—Bible, New Testament, and Psalms; "Sursum Corda," hymns for the sick and suffering; "Voices of Praise," with music; Sunday School Service Book and Hymnal; "Types of Ethical Theory," James Martineau; "Lessons on the Gospel of Luke," Parts 1 and 2; "Lessons on the Gospel of Luke for Young Learners," Parts 1, 2, and 3; New Testament (Revised version); "Spirit of the Bible"; "The Martyrdom of Man," Winwood Reade; "Love, the Supreme Gift, and Modes of Sanctification," Drummond; "Ways of the Spirit," F. H. Hedge; "Lectures to Young Men," W. G. Eliot, Jr.; "Lectures to Young Women," W. G. Eliot, Jr.; "Ecce Homo"; "Thorn-dale: A Conflict of Opinions," Wm. Smith; "The Bible Boy"; "Great Truths for Little Children"; "The Mother at Home," J.

Abbot; "The Charm for Sunday-schools" (with music); "The Greatest Thing in the World," Drummond; "The Soul, its Sorrows and its Aspirations," F. W. Newman; "Parables from Nature," Mrs. Gatty; "The Sunday Garland"; "Angel Voices"; "Story of the Resurrection," Furness; "Life of Samuel Willard, D.D."

Mrs. Henry C. Weston, 177 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., will give and send the following books: Macaulay's "Essays," 3 volumes; Liddell and Scott's "Greek-English Lexicon"; Gray's "Botany"; Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister"; lives of the following artists in separate volumes: Raphael, Van Dyck, Murillo, Guido Reni, Claude, Rembrandt, Titian, Albert Dürer, Michel Angelo, Reynolds; Hillard's "Italy"; Robertson's "Sermons," 2 volumes; "Christmas," etc., Washington Irving; "Romances of the Middle Ages," Cox; "Emin Pasha in Central Africa"; "Odes and Lyrics," Lowell; "Progress and Poverty," Henry George; "I go a-fishing," Prime; "Oliver Twist," Dickens; "David Grieve," Mrs. Ward; "For his Sake," Mrs. Alexander; "Micah Clarke," Conan Doyle; "Lucia, Hugh, and Another"; "Aunt Johnnie," Winter; "Not all in Vain"; "The Sinner's Comedy"; "The Deerslayer," Cooper; "War and Peace," Tolstoi.

I have a great many good papers and magazines, odd numbers, that I have read, that I should be very glad to send on to others if postage is furnished.

Your mission is a noble one, and I only wish it were in my power to take an active part in helping it along more than I can now do. Sincerely yours, M. W. Tyner. Address Mrs. James H. Tyner, 916 North Ninth Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

I received *The Cheerful Letter* to-day. I was quite surprised, as I did not know there was a publication of that name. Please inform me what friend was so kind as to pay the subscription. I am pleased with any scheme that brings reading matter and kindly letters into my lonely home.

Since I have had a wheel-chair, I pass the time in the open air. But winter will soon confine me to the house. Then reading matter will be at a premium with me. I am fond of all kinds of reading matter (except old papers), but like novels, magazines,

and biography the best. I am too poor to exchange books. I am entirely helpless, and unable to earn money in any way. Through the kindness of Mrs. George W. Wright of Denver, Colorado, I am a subscriber to the *Open Window* and the *Housewife*. Mrs. Howell of Albany, New York, sends me *Demorest's Magazine*. After reading them, I will gladly send them to any invalid who will send postage and address.

I have a few books, bound and paper-covered, that it will give me pleasure to send to any shut-in who will pay postage: "The Little Minister," Barrie; "Bride of Lammermoor," Scott; "East Lynne," Wood; "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Stowe; "Eight Days"; "Neva's Three Lovers," Cameron; "A Wedding Journey," De Maupassant; "Color Studies"; "Short Stories," by Sullivan; "Great Taboo," Allen; "Mr. Beeson's Will," "She," Haggard; "The Marriage of Elinor"; "Guy Mannering," "Ivanhoe," Scott; "Black Pearl"; "Gypsy Queen"; "Corsican Brothers"; "Sunshine and Roses," Clay; "Never too Late to Mend," Reade; and a number of *Cosmopolitan*, *Demorest's*, *Godey's*, *Lippincott's*, and *Graphic Magazines*.

I had a large quantity of first-class reading matter burned, when our house on Dryden Street was destroyed. I have letter friends who send me reading matter regularly; but, when one can do nothing else to pass away the time, it is wonderful the amount of reading one can do. Yours gratefully, William Sheppard, 362 Young Street, Charleston, West Virginia.

I can furnish the tracts "Blessed be Drudgery," "Wrestling and Blessing," and "Thorn Bearer" to all who apply, and a limited number of "The Faith that makes Faithful." Yours cordially, Mrs. Thomas L. Johnson, 171 Kennard Street, Cleveland, Ohio.

Miss Virginia Fisher, Fisher Avenue, Roxbury, Mass., offers to send the *Christian Register* weekly, as it comes out.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass., offers "The Life and Times of Jesus, as narrated by Thomas Didymus," "The Problem of the Fourth Gospel," "Self-culture," by James Freeman Clarke. (These books would be useful to a minister or in a library.)

Having enjoyed so much the books sent me by "The Book Club," I will gladly send the following to any who would like them: the *Physical Review*, published quarterly; *Ladies' Home Journal*; "Mr. Scarborough's Family," by Anthony Trollope; "Homes Abroad"; and "Deceivers Ever." I would be very glad of old or new numbers of the *Arena* or *Forum*, or books of that style of reading; any of the new books on social, financial, or political and religious subjects.

I greatly enjoy *The Cheerful Letter*, especially the Bible lesson and the letters from the members. I have been South four years. I would like to receive letters from all the members in the South, telling me of their town and homes; but, if I do not reply, it will be because I am not able to write. High Point is a nice, healthy town; but we do not know which part of the South is the best to select for a home. Emma M. Backus, High Point, Guilford County, North Carolina.

Mrs. Fannie A. Clarkson, 310 Jackson Street, Atlanta, Georgia, will give and send the following books: "Child's History of England," Dickens; "Voltaire and Novalis," Carlyle; "Science at Home," James R. Nichols, M.D.; "Tom Brown's School days"; "Lives of the Poets," Johnson; "Wanderings in South America," Charles Waterton; "Doctor Antonio," Ruffini; "Ten Years in Prison," Silvio Pellico; "Undine" and "The Two Captains," Fouque; "A Laodicean," Thomas Hardy; "Historical and Other Essays," Froude.

The Allston Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange offer the following books: "Twice-told Tales," Hawthorne; "The Reproach of Annesley," Maxwell Grey; "Life of Fredrika Bremer"; "Lady Branksmere," the Duchess; "Donovan," Edna Lyall; "Vicomte de Bragelonne," Dumas; "David Copperfield," Dickens; "Last of the Mohicans," J. F. Cooper; "Mayor of Casterbridge," T. Hardy; "Pendennis," W. M. Thackeray; "Our Mutual Friend," Dickens. Address Mrs. William B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

Miss M. F. Ranney, 26 Chester Square, Boston, Mass., will send the following books to any one desiring them. "Letters of Lydia Maria Child"; "Maria," George Isaacs; "Atlantis," Donnelly; "Duties of

Women," Frances Power Cobbe; "What I Remember," Trollope; "Germany Seen without Spectacles"; "Letters from a High Latitude," Dufferin; "Life of Christ," Farrar; "First Love Best," Gail Hamilton; "Seaside and Fireside," "Kavanagh," "Hyperion," "Evangeline," "Courtship of Miles Standish," Longfellow; "Gold Foil," "Bitter-sweet," Holland; "Woman's Thoughts about Woman"; "Lectures on Preaching," Phillips Brooks; "Queen Victoria's Life of the Prince Consort"; "In the Cheering-up Business," Lee; "Love Affairs of an Old Maid"; "Jews of Barnow"; "Life Thoughts," Beecher; "Where the Battle was Fought"; "Fanny Fern: A Memorial"; "Adopting an Abandoned Farm," Kate Sanborn; "New England Girlhood," Lucy Larcom.

REQUESTS.

The *Review of Reviews* is asked for by Mrs. Julia E. Merriam, Pequabuck, Connecticut, Mrs. Annie L. Gordon, Gorham, New Hampshire, Mrs. H. A. Lansing, Salt Point, Dutchess County, New York, Mrs. R. F. A. Williams, Abington, Connecticut, Mrs. Ida Latson, Olympia, Washington, R. G. Beverly, Winchester, Indiana, Mrs. Jennie Dilley, Silver City, South Dakota.

(Mrs. Latson would like good reading of any kind.)

Mrs. M. C. Lawrason, Wicker, Cumberland County, North Carolina, whose request for an encyclopædia, etc., appeared in the November number, has several children between nine and nineteen years old. Her nearest neighbors are six miles away.

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado, who lends books to a circle of young people, asks for any of Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney's books, except "Patience Strong's Outings." She would especially like "Boys at Chequasset" or "Faith Gartney's Girlhood."

Mrs. Alida D. Mason, Oaks Corners, Ontario County, New York, would be glad to receive reading.

Mrs. Louisa M. Stevenson, South Cabot, Vermont, would be glad to receive a Bible with large print.

Mrs. Julia E. Merriam, Pequabuck, Connecticut, asks for a geology and "Pratt Portraits."

Mrs. W. N. Canfield, New Milford, Connecticut, who has been a shut-in for seven years, would like to receive some books or magazines.

I would be very much pleased to receive some books or magazines of any date to help pass away the time, or, I should say, "rainy season" of eight months, during which time we are obliged to be shut in. I have five children living, ages from seven to twenty-one. All are able to read and write, and would like reading matter if I was in circumstances to obtain it for them; and trashy reading they do not like or will I allow. I can read German, also. I have several neighbors with large families of children to whom I could pass the reading. They would very thankfully receive it. I take *The Cheerful Letter*, and thought it better to write you direct, as we live at such a distance from Boston. I would like to shake hands with you in sympathy for the good work you are doing and have in your power to do. Meanwhile, I am respectfully yours, Mrs. S. C. Lange, Olympia P.O., Washington.

Mrs. Alexander Beck, Box 92, Merchantville, New Jersey, asks for any books by Marietta Holley, Miss Alcott, or Rhoda Broughton. (Miss Holley's books are "My Opinions," etc., by "Josiah Allen's Wife.")

Will any persons having the current numbers of any of the following magazines, and who are willing to send them regularly after reading to a most deserving person, please communicate with Miss A. E. Howard, 63 West Newton Street, Boston, Mass.? *Arena*, *North American Review*, *Forum*, *Nineteenth Century*, *Popular Science*, *New World*, *Psychical Review*, *Scribner*, *Public Opinion*, *Outlook*, *Presbyterian*, *Watchman*.

Miss Howard will give the particulars of the case upon application.

(In most cases, it is best to give the name in *The Cheerful Letter*, that readers may know it is not some one to whom they already send.—Ed.)

Mrs. Nellie Owen, Three States, Mississippi County, Missouri, wishes to buy for her young daughter a second-hand copy of any one of Miss Alcott's books. She is not able to buy a new one.

I wish to ask through *The Cheerful Letter* for any one of Olive Thorne Miller's books, and the *Chautauquan*, a few back numbers, and as it comes out; I wish them for helps in home study. *The Cheerful Letter* is doing such a beautiful work. I wonder if the workers can really realize what a blessing their work is to the Western folks. Mrs. D. O. Gilbert, Benkelman, Nebraska.

Mrs. Gilbert also asks for reading for Mrs. George Garretson, Perry, P.—County, Cherokee Strip, of whom she writes she would be glad of any good reading matter, especially any ladies' magazine or good papers. Is a young mother a stranger in a strange land where they have come to make their home. Is not strong, and suffering from that worst of all ailments, homesickness. Loves good cheerful reading, and will make good use of it.

Will some one, after reading, send the *Ladies' Home Companion* printed in Springfield, Ohio, or the *Household* printed in Boston, or the *Youth's Companion*? And I will try and return the favor in some way. I will send "Black Beauty" to any one that would like it. Mrs. Frank W. Grant, Acton, Maine, York County.

Dear Editor,—Can you make room for me? As I come with thanks for each little favor received, I would have been glad to answer personally; but my health would not permit so much writing, no more than my purse for the necessary materials. I thank the unknown donor ever so much for the postals lately received. I also would be grateful for reading the coming long winter, as my little girl goes to school, and I am alone from eight o'clock until four. Of my choice in reading, I prefer household journals and writings by the author of "Dora Thorne" and by Mary J. Holmes, etc. Have longed for "Stepping Heavenward." The first three years of my shut-in life I spent in tears of regretting. Finally, through the kindness of others, I learned that it was a great comfort to an invalid to be remembered, so tried to return each favor received by being kind to another in like circumstances. (Mrs.) R. L. Terry, Speonk, Suffolk County, Long Island.

I am the shut-in that requested the *New York Ledger* in the September number of *The Cheerful Letter*; and, as I didn't receive

it, I suppose none of your readers takes it. Won't you please ask some of them to send me "Golden Days" every week after reading it? If they will, I will send "Yankee Blade" in exchange. Yours respectfully, Thomas F. Lockhart, Wellington, Missouri.

C. E. Deuel, South Trenton, New York, would like "Dorothy Foster" or "Good Luck."

Mrs. D. Warner, Grove, Granger County, Ohio, is "hungry for good reading."

The *Review of Reviews* or the *Nation* is asked for by the following persons: Mrs. Mary B. Keech, Calmar, Iowa, Miss Eva N. Holt, University P.O., California, Miss Olive Smith, Centre Moriches, Suffolk County, New York, Mrs. Julia A. Hodgdon, 46 Kent Street, Newburyport, Mass., Miss D. D. Dunlop, State Hospital, Tewksbury, Mass., Mrs. Emily Downing, 43 Maplewood Avenue, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

If the Tuskegee Normal School student who applied to Miss Mattie E. French, Kenosha, Wisconsin, will please send his address to her again (it has been mislaid), she will now be happy to send him a volume of sermons by Andrew P. Peabody.

Will some one please remember me, when they have reading to spare? I live far off in the country, with my five little ones to take care of, and no church, no library, no post-office nearer than Olympia. The cold, rainy season now coming upon us makes me yearn for something to read and redeem time. Sincerely, Mrs. Ella Hundley, Olympia, Washington.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—For a long time I have thought of asking a place among you. I am a new subscriber to *The Cheerful Letter*, am much pleased with it. I, too, would like some sister to send me reading, such as "A Mad Marriage," "Schönberg-Cotta Family," "Stepping Heavenward." My two boys, eight and eleven years old, would like "Robinson Crusoe" and "Child's History of the United States." Any story book would be very acceptable to them, living in the country. Mrs. Ida Latson, care of F. A. Oades, Olympia, Washington.

Dear Friend,—I write to tell you that I have the *Youth's Companion* for the past

year, and will gladly send them to any one that will forward postage. Am sorry to ask this, but I can't afford it. I would like some of Mrs. Whitney's books so much, or, in fact, any good reading that can be spared, and would thank the sender very much. I will pass them on to others after reading. Mrs. Dora Rhoades, Fleming, Logan County, Colorado.

The Cambridge Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange makes the following gratifying report:—

"We began work Dec. 14, 1892, as a branch of the First Church (Unitarian) Women's Alliance. We have begged nearly six hundred books and many more hundreds of magazines, and have sent away already the most of our books to one hundred and twenty-eight correspondents.

"One of our members writes:—

"I take such pleasure in the little I can do in this "Book and Magazine Club" work. When I tie up my packages and address them to these homes where they are so welcome, it seems like Christmas. I just enjoy it! If I were a little child, I would speak of it as "great fun." And, then, I always receive such prompt and appreciative acknowledgments."

LETTERS.

Through the kind consideration of my thoughtful friend, Mrs. Hunt, I became acquainted with *Cheerful Letter*. I hastily sent my name to Miss Langmaid, offering myself as a member of the Exchange. I am delightfully pleased with the little magazine.

I have been an invalid over twelve years, not being able to walk or raise my hands to my head. My joints are stiff and drawn out of shape by rheumatism. I cannot knit or sew, but I can write by resting my right hand on top of my left one. I was taken sick a few months after I was married.

My marriage was, seemingly, a prelude to a long life of invalidism.

It is extremely grievous to be stricken down in early life, when life is full of happy possibilities and future usefulness.

My friends often tell me that I am cheerful for a shut-in; but little do they know of the sad regrets and bitter disappointments that lie buried in a silent heart.

I would be pleased to receive calico quilt

blocks nine inches square, the nine-patch pattern preferred.

Dear readers, may we all learn to believe good things of God, and then live as we believe. Lovingly yours in His name, Mrs. Mary B. Keech, Calmar, Iowa.

I have had a few copies of the *Housewife* given me, and in one of them I read of your kindness in sending reading to the poor invalids. I also am one, have been confined to the house for twelve years, and a good deal of the time to my room and bed, with a complication of diseases, principally rheumatism and heart disease, and my lot is very hard; for my husband, who was once a man kind and industrious, alas! is so no more, for the foul demon of intemperance has full control of him most of the time, and his earnings mostly go to gratify his desires. Oh, is it not so sad that rum and tobacco should ruin so many otherwise happy homes! I have passed through every stage of extreme poverty, degradation, and even death has entered our poor home. I am alone so much of the time and so sad that, if kind people would remember me with some story papers or books to help pass the many weary, lonely hours away, I would be ever grateful. If you or your friends you speak of have more reading matter and will send me some, I will as soon as I read send to some other poor shut-in, like myself, if I possibly have *postage* at the time; but I cannot earn anything, for I cannot use my hands to sew for months at a time, the least jar affects my heart so badly. I can never repay this kindness if granted, but there is one who has. In giving to the poor, we are lending to the Lord. Should you see fit to grant me this great boon, please address.

(The address will be given by the editor to any one who wishes for it.)

I will write to all my *Cheerful Letter* friends by writing to you, and thank you all kindly and sincerely for all your kindness shown unto me. How could I have passed those weary months but for you? I have received sweet, Christian-like letters from some, books and magazines from others. Dear friends, we may never meet on earth; but may we meet in that brighter world on high! Some of our family have been sick ever since September 1, some-

times two and three down at once,—chills and fever nearly all the time: as soon as one is up, another is down. Yet poverty compels us to stay here till spring, if not longer.

May I ask my *Cheerful Letter* friends to remember us in prayer? I hope, if according to God's will, we may be enabled to bid adieu to these swamps next spring, and settle down on high land once more. I know, if it is his will, it will be so. It is best to let patience have her perfect work.

We are living more than forty miles from Morgan City, but a little boat brings our mail once a week.

Will any kind friend send *The Cheerful Letter*, after reading, to Mrs. E. M. Seiley, Beaver P. O., Louisiana? Such would be very thankfully received.

Any reading sent to Miss S. A. Bond would be most welcome. She is a good girl, trying to keep everything in order for her father, her mother being dead. She has several little brothers. Her address is Miss S. A. Bond, Beaver P. O., Louisiana. May God bless you all! Sincerely, Mrs. M. A. Smith, Morgan City, Louisiana. Care of E. Bass.

I have been in poor health for fourteen years, and have now been confined to the bed for six months with that dreadful disease, spinal meningitis. I am now so as to sit up considerable through the day, for which I am very thankful. Since I have been in bed, my father, my last earthly parent, has been called from earth away, which was a terrible shock to me. I have one child, a boy, fourteen years old. We are poor. I once took two very nice papers, but was obliged to withdraw my subscription, as I could not afford them any longer. It was a great sacrifice to me. I have many trials in this life, and find comfort and peace only in a risen Saviour. I can do a little light work now, such as sewing, crocheting, or knitting. Would be very thankful for silk scraps for crazy work or any little remembrances. Am very weak and nervous, and my poor heart craves words of sympathy. I did not know as I had a right to write this letter, but felt as though I wanted to; and you can do as you like about printing it. If you do print it, please send me sample of paper, so I may know. Would subscribe for *Cheerful Letter* if I could, but

haven't the means. Would gladly send any little thing I could to any of the shut-ins, though I have so little; yet it is in my heart to do all I can for those who are suffering. I feel that your little paper is a blessing; and may God bless you in your good work! I would be very much pleased with silk scraps or a few curios from the ocean. Should this be printed, please send sample of paper in which it is printed. Your afflicted friend, C. V. Mead, Iola, Wisconsin.

I have been so pleased with the used stamps sent, reading matter, and letters. My reading matter is given to a number of families in town, and in this way does a great deal of good. I am trying to earn money to go back to the hospital with; and the cancelled stamps are sold, and the money used for that purpose. I hope the kind friends will save their used stamps through the winter, and send them to me. This will help me so much. I have an invalid friend, Mrs. Louise Bailey, Meredith Hollow, Delaware County, New York. Will you please remember her on her birthday, January 15? She is suffering from an incurable spinal disease. Please remember her with reading, letters, or anything dear to a shut-in's heart.

Those living in the bustle of city life little realize how lonely we shut-ins get, living out in the country, not a sound to be heard, or nothing for the eye to look upon but the bare field. May the time *never* come when we shall be deprived of our *Cheerful Letter*! Your shut-in sister who *hopes* some day to be well, Miss Florence A. Langley, West Levant, Maine.

Mr. L. D. Boise, Hinsdale, Mass., asks for "The Life of Channing" and "The Life of Theodore Parker."

Mrs. Jennie Dilley, Silver City, South Dakota, asks for a book on kindergarten methods called "Paradise of Childhood."

Several copies of *The Ladies' Home Journal* have been offered, too late to insert the offer in the usual place. Requests for these may go directly to Mrs. J. B. Millet, as above.

Will any minister who receives this paper assist us by sending to our secretary names of invalids, and of young people liv-

ing in lonely places without libraries, schools, or means of education, and especially the addresses of the mothers of young families living on ranches or prairies?

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or Linden Place, Brookline, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER."—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. J. B. Millet, 150 Charles Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Millet; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass., asks for names of subscribers to *The Cheerful Letter* who are willing to send off their copy of this paper to shut-ins or those not able to subscribe for it.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly, or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Send also all notices of *changes of address* to Miss Langmaid. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.

A great deal of interesting material has been necessarily omitted in this number, for want of space.